

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 4 - 6 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein and add the following new claims.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3 (Canceled)

Claims 4 - 6 (canceled)

7. (new)      A vacuum processing apparatus comprising:

a vacuum container in which an inside thereof is evacuated and in which a wafer is processed using plasma therein;

an inner chamber detachably disposed inside the vacuum container and having an inner space in which a wafer table for supporting the wafer thereon is disposed and in which a processing gas is supplied, the inner chamber having an axisymmetric structure;

a side wall delimiting a part of the inner chamber and having an opening disposed therein through which the wafer to be supported on the wafer table is passed;

a gate disposed so as to enable communication with the opening in the side wall of the inner chamber so as to enable transfer of the wafer from outside of the vacuum container to the inner space of the inner chamber through the opening in the side wall; and

a valve disposed between the opening in the side wall and the gate, the valve being movable with respect to the outside of the side wall of the inner chamber so as to open and close the opening and for sealing the opening in an airtight manner, a portion of the valve having a shape which does not interfere with the axisymmetric structure of the inner chamber.

8. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein a portion of the valve has a shape so that when the valve closes the opening in the side wall unevenness on an inner surface of the inner chamber is reduced.

9. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising a driver connected to the valve for enabling movement of the valve, wherein the inner chamber is detachably disposed with respect to the vacuum container so as to enable lifting up of the inner chamber from the vacuum container.

10. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising a driver connected to the valve for enabling movement of the valve, wherein the inner chamber is detachably disposed with respect to the vacuum container so as to enable lifting up of the inner chamber from the vacuum container.

11. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the valve is movable in both vertical and horizontal directions.

12. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the valve is movable in both vertical and horizontal directions.

13. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the valve is movable in both vertical and horizontal directions.

14. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the valve is movable in both vertical and horizontal directions.

15. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising another valve disposed outside of the gate, the another valve being movable so as to open and close the gate and enable sealing of the gate in an airtight manner.

16. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the another valve when closing the gate enables sealing of the gate in an airtight manner while the inner chamber is removed from the vacuum container.

17. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising another valve disposed outside of the gate, the another valve being movable so as to open and close the gate and enable sealing of the gate in an airtight manner.

18. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the another valve when closing the gate enables sealing of the gate in an airtight manner while the inner chamber is removed from the vacuum container.

19. (new) The vacuum processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the valve has a shape so that a portion thereof is insertable within the opening of the inner chamber for airtightly sealing the opening and to reduce unevenness on an inner surface of the inner chamber.